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1 killed in fiery tanker-truck crash that shut down I-70 near Morrison

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~3 minutes

One person was killed and Interstate 70 was shut down in both directions near Morrison on Thursday morning when the driver of an SUV crashed into the back of a parked tanker truck carrying fuel, shooting flames and thick, black smoke billowing into the sky.

Paramedics also transported the driver of the tanker truck to a hospital, said Jacki Kelley, a spokeswoman for the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office.

Both directions of the interstate were closed for firefighting efforts around 10 a.m., [according to sheriff's officials](#). The closures are expected to disrupt evening commutes, [they said](#) at 11:14 a.m.

"It's still an extremely active scene," Kelley said. "This is going to impact traffic for hours in both directions."



One person was killed in a crash involving a vehicle and a tanker truck on Interstate 70 near Morrison on Thursday, May 16, 2024. (Photo via Jefferson County Sheriff's Office)

The tanker truck, the white SUV that struck it and parts of the surrounding grassland all caught fire, Kelley said. The sheriff's office worked with multiple fire crews and resources to extinguish the blaze.

The initial investigation indicated that a semitrailer traveling west on I-70 overheated and its driver pulled over onto the shoulder, [according to the Colorado State Patrol](#). The SUV then crashed into the rear of the parked truck's tanker.

Spilled fuel flowed through a culvert and quickly spread across eastbound lanes of the interstate as well, state patrol officials said. The culvert needs to be inspected for damage from the fire, officials said.

Although initial estimates from the sheriff's office reported up to six additional vehicles were involved in the crash, Kelley confirmed only the truck and the SUV were impacted.

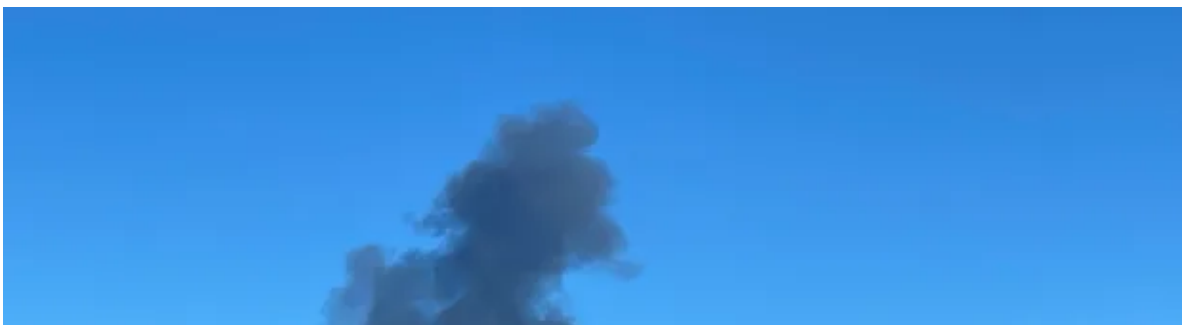
The interstate was closed in both directions from exit 254 at Genesee on the west to exit 260 at Colorado 470 on the east, Kelley said.

As of 11:13 a.m., the Colorado Department of Transportation was [estimating a half-hour delay in either direction](#).

Sheriff's officials advised drivers to use Highway 285, U.S. 6 or Highway 40 to head west into the mountains.

This is a developing story and will be updated.

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The smoke from a fiery crash on Interstate 70 near Morrison is visible from the area near Highway 285 on May 16, 2024. (Parker Gabriel, The Denver Post)